

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Just a few weeks ago, the Democrats slammed through a \$1 trillion stimulus bill by scaring the American people, by declaring that the economy would collapse without it. This so-called "recovery plan" grew government and not jobs. It created 33 new Federal programs and gave record money to 73 other Federal programs. Forgotten in this mix is the American taxpayer.

A few days ago, the President, in his first Cabinet meeting, asked his administration to find \$100 million—that's million with an "m"—in savings. So the President asked for and got \$1 trillion and now wants to save \$100 million. How much is \$1 trillion? If you spent \$1 million a day every day, it would take you nearly 3,000 years to get to \$1 trillion.

The Federal Government spends \$100 million every 13 minutes. Our government cannot be all things to all people. We have got to stop running this government on a credit card. I urge my colleagues to find ways to cut spending. And remember, it is the American taxpayers' money, not Congress' money, not the government's money.

#### THE WISDOM OF WASHINGTON

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, this week we will see the 2009 budget coming before Congress for a final vote. In the wisdom that only the City of Washington, D.C., can bestow, this budget borrows record-setting sums, raises taxes, and spends taxpayer money at an unprecedented clip. This so-called wisdom produced a budget that places our children and grandchildren in a state of perpetual servitude to the national debt and is a perverse sort of wisdom indeed.

This reality brings to mind something that Thomas Jefferson penned in 1781. He said that "every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves, therefore, are its only safe depositories."

The current conventional wisdom in Washington of borrowing and spending doesn't work for American families, and it won't work for the Federal Government.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

#### RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE ACCIDENT OF SS SULTANA

Mr. SNYDER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 329) recognizing the anniversary of the tragic accident of the steamboat ship SS Sultana, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution, as amended.

The text of the resolution, as amended, is as follows:

##### H. RES. 329

Whereas the explosion of the SS Sultana on April 27, 1865, is considered the worst maritime disaster in American history;

Whereas the steamboat ship SS Sultana exploded on the Mississippi River 7 miles north of Memphis, Tennessee, at 2:00 a.m.;

Whereas roughly 1,800 of the 2,400 passengers lost their lives in the tragedy;

Whereas 2,000 passengers on the SS Sultana at the time of the explosion were Union prisoners of war recently released from the Confederate Andersonville and Cahaba Prison Camps in Alabama;

Whereas several of the former prisoners of war were suffering from disease and extreme malnutrition caused by the overcrowded and unsanitary conditions at the prison camps;

Whereas the explosion was presumed to have been caused by a defective boiler trying to overcome the current of the Mississippi River;

Whereas the enormous loss of life was attributed to an overcrowded vessel caused in part by poor oversight on behalf of the Union commanding officers responsible for the release of the prisoners of war;

Whereas up to 300 of the initial survivors of the explosion later died from burns, hypothermia, or exposure;

Whereas then Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton stated in his annual report for 1865 that the loss of "over 1200 officers and soldiers—a loss greatly increased . . . by an improper and unnecessary overloading of the boat";

Whereas only one of the several individuals responsible for the conditions of the steamer or the overcrowding of the vessel which contributed to the tragedy and large loss of life was ever prosecuted; and

Whereas the disaster received little attention in the newspapers or magazines of the time and is scarcely remembered today: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 144-year anniversary of the tragic accident of the steamboat ship SS Sultana;

(2) honors the memory of the soldiers and passengers who lost their lives in this disaster;

(3) regrets the lack of military and civilian oversight that led to the explosion and tremendous loss of life; and

(4) rededicates itself to honoring all our veterans and military families with the highest level of support in quality resources, equipment and services.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SNYDER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SNYDER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, American history is a rich one when it comes to the Civil War. Unfortunately, not all events are known or remembered as they ought to be, and the tragic story of the Steamboat Sultana, lost April 27, 1865, is one of those events. Books can tell us the story today.

Retelling the story one night in 1994, author Jerry Potter, as an after-dinner speaker on a modern Mississippi riverboat, brought to life the events of his 1992 book, "The Sultana Tragedy: America's Greatest Maritime Disaster."

Each of the attendees, including me, at that very warm and comfortable banquet that night felt the horror as we realized survivors and bodies alike floated and bobbed down this very same Mississippi River on April 27, 1865, the same place that we were bobbing and having dinner that night. This is Potter's book.

Years later, other books have appeared. In 1996, "Disaster on the Mississippi: The Sultana Explosion, April 27, 1865." In 2009, just in the last few months, "Sultana: Surviving the Civil War Prison and the Worst Maritime Disaster in American History," by Alan Huffman. "The Sultana Tragedy," Jerry Potter's book, is printed by the Pelican Press, "Disaster on the Mississippi" by the Naval Institute Press, and the most recent book, "Sultana," by the Smithsonian Press.

Today, April 27, is another anniversary of these events. But why do most of us know more about the Titanic than the Sultana, even though more died in the Sultana? The end of a horrific war a few weeks before; the assassination of Lincoln, his death; a new President; April 26, the night before the Sultana sank, John Wilkes Booth was killed; a war-weary Nation trying to move on, tired of years of carnage. And one sad detail; most onboard the Sultana were not prominent like some of the folks on the Titanic. Most were enlisted Union soldiers recently released from the hells of POW camps. As Jerry Potter says, "Who remembers the steerage passengers aboard the Titanic?" I do want to point out there was one prominent American onboard the Sultana, U.S. Senate-elect from Arkansas, William D. Snow.

Now, there were certainly people on the east coast at that time that would say the same thing Jerry Potter said, "Who remembers the steerage passengers aboard the Titanic?" And so today we remind America and ourselves with this resolution, and today in Memphis, right now a ceremony of remembrance is taking place.

So what story needs to be told? What was the Sultana? This picture was the last picture of this boat, and for many of the people who we see onboard this ship right now, it was the last photograph that was ever taken of them before their death.

The Sultana was an 1863 paddle-wheeled steamboat, modern and tough, built to handle the Mississippi River at flood stage day or night. Contracted in April 1865 to haul sick, emaciated, weakened Union prisoners of war who had been in the prisoner of war camps at Andersonville and Cahawba. And to give you a sense of how weak and emaciated they were, many of these men had lost up to 100 pounds of weight. The pictures of them coming out of the camp were comparable to what we saw coming out of the death camps in Europe at the end of that war.

The boat was built to handle approximately 400 people; it was loaded with perhaps 2,500. There were allegations of bribery amongst the steamboat companies trying to get government businesses. There were allegations of poor-quality repair work done in Memphis. The whole issue of whether it was overcrowded or overloaded continues to be one that is discussed by historians, the difference being if something is overcrowded doesn't necessarily mean that the ship can't handle the weight. And that was certainly the case with the Steamboat Sultana; it could handle the weight.

□ 1415

The other side of that argument is, as you can tell from this picture, with all the folks on top, it became top heavy, and there is one school of thought that says because it was so top heavy, in fact, as the boat would career back and forth in the flood stage of the Mississippi, it would have affected the shifting waters in the boilers that may have led to the boilers blowing.

At approximately 11 p.m. the night of April 26, it left Memphis. It went across the Mississippi River that at that point was about 4 miles wide at flood stage. It went to Hopefield, Arkansas, got a load of coal, pushed out into the river. And when it was about 7 miles north of Memphis in the river at 2 a.m., the boilers blew. It was described as this thunderous, thunderous noise that was heard for miles, and thus begins the horror. And, of course, there were no photographs, no on-site CNN news. What we see are depictions of drawings of people trying to put together the recollections of survivors about what it looked like. This is, by the way, the cover of the most recent book by Alan Huffman, and that's the drawing that's on the cover of his book.

But thus begins the horror: death and injury by explosion and crash, death and injury by scalding from the boilers, death and injury by fire that went on for hours, death and injury by drowning. These were weak, emaciated peo-

ple who did not know how to swim or were too weak to swim even if they knew how to swim, in very cold waters coming from the north. This was April 27, springtime. The river was at flood stage, and those waters were cold waters coming from the north. Death and injury by hypothermia, death and injury weeks and months later by complications of infection and other medical challenges of those weakened by war who were unable to fight injury. The boat had one lifeboat and it had 76 cork life preservers.

There were probably about 1,800 dead. We will never know for sure. Most of the Union POWs were from Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee. There were many volunteers along the shore or on boats that participated in picking up survivors and bodies. One of those was John Fogleman and his sons, Dallas and Leroy, from Arkansas. They built a raft of two logs and rescued people, six and nine at a time, and then their home was turned into a temporary hospital. The Fogleman family is still very much in Arkansas and active in public affairs.

Investigations began immediately, but the survivors were never satisfied that their story was ever told.

Probably the best description of the summary of why we need to remember this comes from the Jerry Potter book. He says: "To say that the explosion on board the Sultana was purely accidental or unpreventable does not take into account the irresponsible conduct and criminal negligence that characterized the actions of an entire chain of army command and the profit-making schemes of various civilians. The Sultana tragedy is much more than a record of a steamboat. The deeper record is one of greed and the lengths to which men will go to achieve personal gain, even if that gain means endangering the lives of others." And that's the end of the quote from Jerry Potter's book "The Sultana Tragedy."

March 4, 1931, a man named Pleasant Keeble died. He was the last known Sultana survivor. So now we no longer learn from the survivors. We learn from Civil War historians and maritime and military scholars. Today we remember a little bit and today we resolve ourselves a little. And the resolve part of our resolution today says the following:

"Resolved, that the House of Representatives, one, recognizes the 144-year anniversary of the tragic accident of the steamboat ship SS Sultana; two, honors the memory of the soldiers and passengers who lost their lives in this disaster; three, regrets the lack of military and civilian oversight that led to the explosion and tremendous loss of life; and, four, rededicates itself to honoring all our veterans and military families with the highest level of support in quality resources, equipment and services."

This is one of those stories, Madam Speaker. It's a rich part of American

history. Unfortunately, it is not as well-known as it could be. We have not learned the lessons from these events as well as we could. I commend this resolution to the Members of the House to vote on today and to vote for this resolution to help in remembering.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FLEMING. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, first of all, I want to thank my colleague from across the aisle, Dr. SNYDER from Arkansas, who also is a physician. He's interested in this very interesting topic and the passage of this very important resolution, H. Res. 329.

I rise in support of House Resolution 329, recognizing the anniversary of the tragic accident of the steamboat ship SS Sultana, which occurred 144 years ago today.

Madam Speaker, on April 27, 1865, the SS Sultana, a Mississippi River steam-powered paddle wheeler, exploded and sank just north of Memphis in the early hours of the morning. There were 2,400 souls aboard when the ship's boilers exploded, blowing the overcrowded steamboat apart and sending scores of helpless passengers into the vast currents of the Mississippi River. Tragically, over 1,800 individuals lost their lives in what is now known to be the worst maritime disaster in the United States. And by comparison the Titanic, which, of course, sank many years later, lost 1,500 lives, and, of course, that's something that we have memorialized for many years. It's even worse than Shiloh when 1,700 lives were lost in 1 day.

The Sultana had frequently been contracted by the War Department to carry troops up and down the river. On the day of the accident, its precious cargo was nearly 2,000 Union prisoners and additional troops who had recently been released from the Confederate prison camps at the infamous Andersonville and Cahawba. And, as I say, 300 or so of these were Active Duty personnel along with the prisoners. This boat was legally registered to carry only 376 personnel, and as you can see, it was about eight times overloaded.

The SS Sultana left New Orleans, and during a routine stop at Vicksburg, the former prisoners, who were anxious to start their journey home, had crowded on board the steamboat in numbers far above its normal capacity. While the boat was at Vicksburg, it was discovered that the boilers were leaking.

And, parenthetically, I have to mention that there were tremendous incentives on both sides to overcrowd this boat. First of all, the ship captains received \$5 per head, which was quite a bit of money in those days. And the Army officers got a \$1.15 kickback. And, of course, the soldiers were just out of Andersonville. They were tired. They wanted to go home. So everyone was obviously in favor of getting this boat underway. Quick repairs were

made. However, it was more or less patchwork rather than true repairs.

Madam Speaker, as the Sultana sailed past Memphis, a combination of disastrous circumstances, including poorly maintained boilers, the powerful current on the Mississippi, and the overcrowded conditions, led to the catastrophic explosion. Thankfully, hundreds of the passengers survived primarily through the help of other steamboats in the area that rushed to the scene. Most remarkable was the willingness of the good people of Memphis to help the injured Union soldiers, who just weeks before had been their enemy.

Sadly, Madam Speaker, although this was an enormous disaster in American history, it remains relatively unknown because, remember, this happened in April 1865, a very special month. What happened in that month? Well, on April 9 the Appomattox surrender occurred. Then President Lincoln was assassinated. Then on April 26 John Wilkes Booth was arrested. And then, finally, General Johnson surrendered and Jefferson Davis was arrested. So you can well see how such a remarkable tragedy found itself in the back pages of the local newspapers.

With that in mind, it is fitting today for all of us Americans to remember the tragic loss of over 1,800 souls on the SS Sultana that happened so many years ago, and I, therefore, strongly urge all Members to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SNYDER. Madam Speaker, at this time I have no further requests for time, and I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FLEMING. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for a closing statement.

Madam Speaker, this, as I said, is a remarkable event in history, and, quite frankly, until recently I was unaware of it, and I, among many others, am a Civil War buff. And it happened between my two home States, Louisiana and Mississippi. So I appreciate very much that this has been brought to light and that we can learn more about it and certainly recognize it for the future.

I do want to point out, however, that this turned out to be an example to some extent of unfettered greed; that is, that there was no control over the captain of the ship as well as Army officers. They were in it for profit, and I think they took advantage of the poor Union soldiers who were coming out of desperate situations and so desperately wanted to go home. So I think that's a lesson we can learn for the future, that we need to put our own individual interests at hand and look out for the better good of all.

With that, Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SNYDER. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the leadership of my colleague on this event.

These House resolutions, we know today that we're not passing a statute, we're not changing a law, we're not creating a memorial. What we are trying to do is call attention to what we believe is a very significant event in our Nation's history. And to the families and relatives of the folks who were lost or survived the sinking of the Sultana, to the day they died, they regretted that their country did not pay more attention to what happened. So there are lessons to be learned.

As we are doing this right now on the floor of the House, in Memphis there is an event going on recognizing this event. I want to call attention to my colleague, Congressman STEVE COHEN, as a cosponsor of our resolution from Memphis.

So it is just another thing that we can do to say, hey, America, there is something to learn from our rich, rich history from an event that we all may not know enough about as we would like. And I commend the books that I mentioned to folks and to seek out opinions about what occurred on April 27, the anniversary today, in 1865 on the Mississippi River just north of Memphis.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 329, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SNYDER. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 335) supporting the goals and ideals of National Volunteer Week.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

##### H. RES. 335

Whereas National Volunteer Week will be observed during the week of April 19 through April 25, 2009;

Whereas National Volunteer Week honors the nationwide impact of volunteers in every day American communities;

Whereas the theme of this year's National Volunteer Week is "Celebrating People in Action", which recognizes individuals who dedicate themselves to taking action and solving problems in their communities;

Whereas National Volunteer Week has been an annual celebration since 1974 and

every President since that time has signed a proclamation honoring National Volunteer Week;

Whereas many State and local officials from around the country have actively engaged their communities in celebrating National Volunteer Week;

Whereas data from the Corporation for National and Community Service shows that 61,803,000 volunteers dedicated 8,003,840,108 hours of service to community organizations in 2008;

Whereas volunteers can play a critical role in helping struggling nonprofit organizations with fundraising, directing services to individuals and communities in need, and other skill-based assistance;

Whereas nonprofit organizations are reporting an increase in the number of inquiries from both baby boomers and young people who are ready to serve our Nation;

Whereas "Celebrating People in Action" is the recognition that every citizen can make a difference in their community by taking action through activities like building a ramp to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities, tutoring a child struggling to read, serving food at a homeless shelter, assisting the unemployed with job readiness skills, and many other services; and

Whereas National Volunteer Week provides a moment in time to honor all those who serve locally, nationally and internationally to change lives, rejuvenate communities, and embody the best of the American spirit of responsibility and civic engagement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Volunteer Week;

(2) recognizes the critical role of our national and community service programs;

(3) honors the contributions of all those hard-working American volunteers who make a difference in their communities every day of the year; and

(4) invites all Americans to answer the call to serve through volunteerism in any form.

□ 1430

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise, extend and insert extraneous materials on House Resolution 335 into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands?

There was no objection.

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of House Resolution 335, which supports the ideals and goals of National Volunteer Week. People who volunteer and engage in community service play a vital role in neighborhoods across the country. National Volunteer Week invites all Americans to give back to the community in some form of service.

Last week, President Obama signed into law the Edward M. Kennedy Serve